

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, March 26, 2014

Minutes

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TOWN OF BETHEL
TOWN CLERK

PRESENT: Meghan O'Connor, Angelo Franzese, Patrick Morton, Gary Regan, Lou Valenti, Rachael McGrath and Eileen Earle.

ABSENT: Laura Ferguson and Bill Pullan.

CALL TO ORDER: Meghan O'Connor called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Approval of the minutes for Feb. 26, 2014 was accepted on a motion by Angelo Franzese seconded by Gary Regan abstained by Lou Valenti and Pat Morton, then approved by members present.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Joy Kisling, BSA attended the meeting and express her concerns regarding recreational sports in Bethel. Joy has been involved with BSA since 1978. Her concerns are with the elimination of the Town/Parks & Recreation sponsorship as all the associations are run by volunteers. These volunteers just want to coach and few are willing to take part in the administration. As these volunteers turn over regularly there is little continuity going forward. Eliminating Town sponsorship leaves the organizations without an overseeing entity. This is further complicated by the low registration numbers in sports which impacts the funds needed to run them. Now not only do they have to take on the costs of their officials whose fees are rising but also their own insurance. She would appreciate it if the Town could provide an Insurance policy for all sports organizations, with payment requested from each Association. This would make the insurance more affordable and also make her and all the volunteers feel appreciated and supported. She feels we are asking more of our volunteers now than years ago and so as a Town we need to support and appreciate them to make sure our children have recreational opportunities beyond what the town itself can provide.

Lou Valenti explained that this has been discussed with town officials to have the league's separate from the Parks and Rec. Department.

Joy said that over the years she has kept the registration fee low, \$65 so that all children could afford to play. She also stated that BSA is not part of a national organization like the other Associations and with the decline in the numbers of registrations, the increase in umpire fees it is very difficult financially to obtain the insurance required. She has obtained coverage for this year but in the future would appreciate it if this was something we could revisit. The director, Eileen, stated that she would check with the National Parks and Rec. Insurance to see if this is something we could offer the associations, which would be more affordable.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE, PAYROLL AND INCOME: The Expenditures Report was reviewed and adjustments will be made to the Park Maintenance & Repair account at the end of the month. The Income and Cash Balance Report still shows an increase in comparison to last year. We should continue to see an increase next month as Camp registration starts in April. On a motion by Angelo Franzese and seconded by Gary Regan, the Accounts payable, Payroll and Income were accepted and unanimously approved by all members present.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Information received from Triax Technologies regarding concussion education. Bob Dolan of Triax Technologies attended the meeting and is very interested in working with our Dept. in an effort to make parents more educated regarding concussion via their HeadOn campaign. This program will cover the signs and symptoms, give nutritional facts, and steps to take if a child is experiencing difficulty. Triax makes impact headbands to measure the impact to the skull via a device in the headband. This sensor transmits signals to the trainer on the level of impact which alerts them when it is high so that care can then be given. The impact headband can be purchased for \$149. Parents can purchase the headband and have it programmed to send the signal to their cell phone so that they can monitor their own children. A presentation slideshow to educate the public to head impacts and to gain greater knowledge about the issue of head safety in sports is available at no cost to the town. The Parks and Rec. Dept. and Commission are definitely interested in having Triax Technologies offer their presentation this spring and next fall. Dates will be finalized and a flyer will be sent to all the coaches.
- Sister Anne McCarthy of Saint Mary School and the 2014 Dinner Dance and Auction committee expresses their appreciation on our donation/gift certificate.

PROGRAMS: The Seven Star School of Performing Arts had their dance recital this past weekend which was enjoyed by all the students and their families. Next year the dance classes will be on an 8 week schedule instead of 12. Summer camp information will be posted on the website next Monday, with registrations starting April 23.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

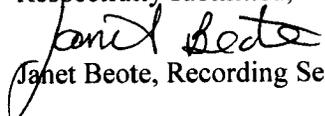
- March 17 was the first day for Bennett Park Registration, which is a new Parks and Rec. responsibility we assumed from the First Selectman's Office.
- April 5th fields will open for Spring Sports. We have received Soccer's insurance, coaches list, player registration etc. and they are all set to start April 5.
- Men's Softball League has over 20 teams for this season.
- A public Budget hearing is scheduled for April 8th. The Parks and Rec. budget submitted for next year is \$940,947.
- The Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts have offered to install new benches at Bennett Park.
- Girl Scout Troop 50151 will be painting the playground at Johnson School and purchasing two new benches.

DOG PARK: The Girl Scouts are still raising money for the proposed dog park. Eileen will check with the Board of Selectmen concerning a leash ordinance and pick up after your dog ordinance before we can go forth with this proposal.

As there was no further business on tonight's agenda, Pat Morton made a motion which was seconded by Lou Valenti to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

The next Parks and Rec. Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, **April 23, 2014** at 7:30 p.m. in the Clifford J. Hurgin Municipal Center.

Respectfully submitted,


Janet Beote, Recording Secretary